



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For Immediate Release**  
**Monday, January 8, 2024**

**COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES \$1.4 MILLION  
ARPA INVESTMENT TO HELP PEOPLE WITH TRANSPORTATION  
BARRIERS GET TO WORK**

*Project Ride serves low-income individuals gain the transportation resources they  
need to get or hold a job*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello, today announced a \$1.4 million allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to Beyond the Sanctuary through the Department of Human Services to help Monroe County residents overcome transportation barriers to get to work. The program, called “Project Ride,” offers a range of services, including financial assistance for vehicle repairs, maintenance purchases like tires, and assistance obtaining a driver’s license and insurance coverage.

“If you can’t make it to work regularly, or on time, you may be able to get a job, but you won’t keep that job for very long. Workforce development sometimes means more than connecting people to good paying jobs, we need to consider *how* people get to those jobs,” **said County Executive Bello**. “We are proud to fund this transformative partnership between the Department of Human Services and Beyond the Sanctuary. Thank you to my colleagues in the County Legislature for approving these funds and to Congressman Morelle and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand for their work to secure these funds.”

“Every day, working parents in our community juggle the demands of transporting their children to school or day care before commuting to work,” **said Thalia Wright, Commissioner of the Department of Human Services**. “For many individuals who are entering the workplace, this juggling act can be a serious barrier to self-sufficiency. Lacking adequate means of transportation, as well as the ability to afford a car, impedes individuals’ abilities to both find and retain employment. Transportation for the community has become an increasingly high priority as more jobs become available in suburban and rural areas. Jobs in these outlying areas are not viable options for community members living in the City of Rochester, unless we address transportation needs.”

“Beyond the Sanctuary recognized the important ways a driver’s license impacts our lives. It’s a standard document that we often take for granted. It’s a critical form of ID

verification for employers, doctor's offices, schools, voter registration offices, and more. Its impact extends beyond convenience and mobility," said **Carmen Allen, President and Executive Director of Beyond the Sanctuary**. "It is necessity. In many cases, it positively changes lives and is the first step toward job opportunities. Our dream of expanding our Drive to Success program beyond helping members of our community obtain their driver's license -- has come true. We are now helping people become self-sufficient through employment and providing a pathway to car ownership. We are fortunate that our leaders in Monroe County share Beyond the Sanctuary's vision, are willing to support our mission of transforming lives through this program, and ultimately believe in the people we both have the privileged to serve."

"ARPA Funds have been a critical tool in recovery from the global pandemic and workforce development is key to our community's success," said **Majority Leader Michael Yudelson**. "We all benefit when more of our citizens are able to have good paying jobs and the tools to perform and stay in the workforce. Eliminating barriers to gainful employment ensures more Monroe County residents will succeed."

"Beyond the Sanctuary helped me accomplish my goal of gaining more independence and I am really proud of that," said **Brittany King, Beyond the Sanctuary client**.

Project Ride will also partner with community organizations such as RochesterWorks and Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Rochester to offer financial literacy education, access to banking services, credit repair guidance, savings strategies, and a 6 week job readiness program for participating individuals.

This project was selected as part of Bring Monroe Back, Monroe County's recovery plan that allocates federal funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to transformative community projects and initiatives. Through the efforts of Congressman Joseph D. Morelle, and Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Monroe County is the recipient of \$144,080,127 in local fiscal recovery funds.

"Unreliable or inaccessible transportation holds far too many people back from accessing good-paying job opportunities, and that is simply unacceptable," said **Congressman Joe Morelle**. "I'm proud to have secured federal funding through the American Rescue Plan Act to support Beyond the Sanctuary's Project Ride, a program designed specifically to help break down the transportation barriers preventing people from accessing high-quality job opportunities. I'm grateful for the leadership and partnership of County Executive Adam Bello as he continues utilizing these federal investments to help breathe life into our neighborhoods and give families the chance to thrive."

"Lack of access to adequate transportation is a substantial hurdle for so many in the job market," said **US Senator Charles Schumer**. "With their 'Project Ride' program, Beyond the Sanctuary and Monroe County are tackling this barrier head on, ensuring job seekers are given the financial support and guidance they need to set themselves up for success. I commend County Executive Bello for using the funds I secured in the American Rescue

Plan Act for local governments to develop Monroe County’s workforce, get more people into good jobs and boost the region’s economy.”

“Many residents throughout Rochester and Monroe County rely on personal transportation to connect them to essential resources and services,” **said U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand.** “This partnership between Monroe County and Beyond the Sanctuary will have a positive impact by removing barriers to transportation and improving accessibility for low-income families throughout the region. I’m proud to have secured this funding through the American Rescue Plan, and I applaud County Executive Bello for these steps to ensure that Monroe County residents are connected to opportunities to succeed. I’ll keep fighting for investments to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to safe and reliable transportation in their communities.”

To sign up for the program visit: <https://www.beyondthesanctuary.org/events>

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